

# Alta Avenue

## Fuel Reduction Project

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Marin Headlands  
Golden Gate National Recreation Area



### Summary

The National Park Service/GGNRA has begun implementing the Alta Avenue Fuel Reduction project to reduce the risk of fire along Alta Avenue and improve habitat for the native trees and other plants. The project's focus is to reduce non-native trees and vegetation, initiate restoration of native plant communities, and widen existing fire corridor access.

### Need for the Project

Alta Avenue is part of the “wildland/urban interface.” Defined by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), wildland urban interface refers to areas where wildfires on public lands would threaten buildings along the fringes of developed areas. Interface areas exist all over the United States, wherever homes are situated near trees and vegetation.

Despite its urban location, Golden Gate National Recreation Area includes many wildland areas, including coniferous with forests, eucalyptus groves, coastal scrub and grasslands that are susceptible to wildfires.

GGNRA shares its boundaries with many interface communities in Marin County, such as Marin City, Mill Valley, Inverness, and Point Reyes Station.

### Fuel Buildup

Non-native eucalyptus trees are extremely flammable due to the large amount of leaf litter they produce and the volatile oil contained in their leaves. In addition, French and Scotch broom, non-native shrubs, have displaced much of the native grassland and added to the fire hazard.

Along Alta Avenue and in the Oakwood Valley watershed, there are approximately 20 acres of eucalyptus and broom. Alta Avenue divides the park from Marin City and Sausalito. Several of these eucalyptus stands extend from the ridge top down the east side of the slope, where they abut the Marin City residential community. French and Scotch broom patches occur along both sides of the slope. The eucalyptus and broom pose a significant fire threat to the residents who live in these areas.

In addition, they also threaten the health of native Live Oak and Bay plant and wildlife communities by crowding them out of their habitats.



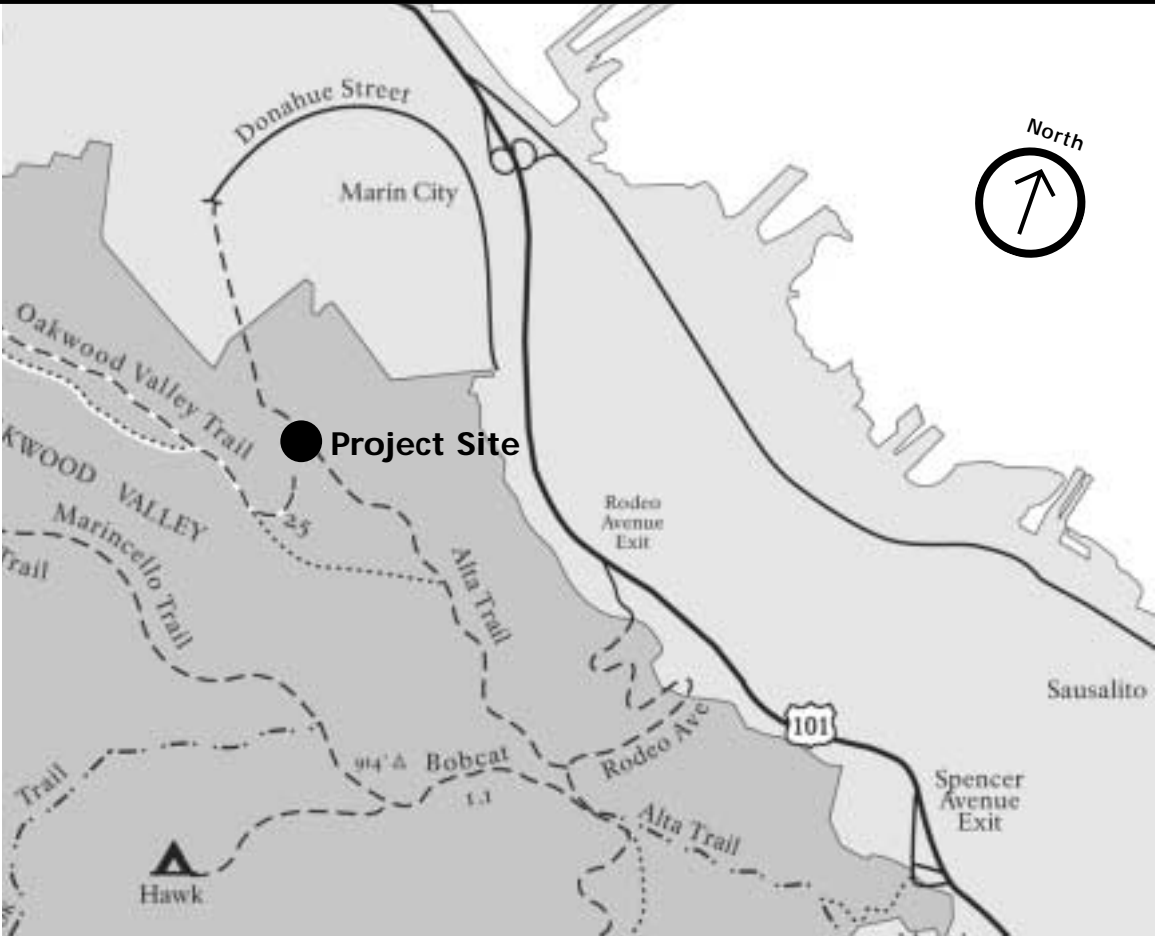
Phase I - eucalyptus removal

The Alta Avenue project site is located in the Marin Headlands, on the ridge above Marin City



Eucalyptus grove

Photo courtesy: Tony Morosco



Photos show before and after broom removal (Spring 2002).



Project Timeline



Coast Live Oak

Photo courtesy: Beatrice F. Howitt  
California Academy of Sciences

The first phase of broom removal started in December 2001 and was completed in April 2002. A crew of 9 people consisting of local residents, adults and high school students worked weekends and holidays to remove broom from along the fire road at the southern end of Alta Avenue. The crew removed approximately 1.5 acres of broom, more than 25,000 plants. The broom debris was chipped and spread on-site as mulch and weed suppression. Broom removal will continue in fall 2002, after rains soften the ground.

The first phase of eucalyptus removal will begin in mid-August 2002, with four acres of eucalyptus trees removed along the fire road. Another six acres will be removed during the fall 2002. In addition, the Monterey cypress grove will be "limbed" and the trees located along Alta Avenue will be trimmed back. In 2003, the eucalyptus sites will be revegetated with native plant species, such as oaks, shrubs, and grasses.

Temporary Access Limitations

Eucalyptus removal will begin in mid-August and is expected to take several months to complete. During this time, visitors will have limited access to the area for safety reasons. Trucks will be using Alta Avenue to remove the eucalyptus logs from the site. The south end of Alta Avenue will be closed on

weekdays between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Visitors will have access to the area in the evenings and on weekends. Maps detailing closure areas are available by calling (415) 331-6374 and soon on our website at: [www.nps.gov/goga/natural](http://www.nps.gov/goga/natural)

For More Information

If you would like more information about this project, please contact:

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